8 March 1971

Harold and Howard:

I'm sorry for these many inordinate delays in answering your letters, and for otherwise being "off the ball". This has been an odd year for me, and I've not been able to get hold of myself. It's true that I have had somewhat more work than usual this year, but I have not been able properly to use the time that I have left over. I've been absent minded, and somewhat disprganized. I expect that this will pass, so please be patient with me.

I notice that I still have the 399 base pix to send. They are enveloped and addressed, but not stamped, and have been lying on my desk under a heap of rubbish for the past week or two. I'll get them off soon. In Howards package will be the return of the take that he sent-- the one dealing with Specter. The tape was made over an existing recording of music, so that I could not understand much that was said. I got a good idea of what happened from letters and articles, though, so I don't think that I missed the essense of the affair. It seems truly dandy-- I congratulate Howard.

Howard's description of his radio broadcast sound good, too. I would be interested to hear a tape of that, if he has it.

Howard: I'll search for the reference in the Exec. Sessions and will send what you want.

Harold--re your 15 Feb letter to Bud and Bob; the paragraph on p.1 mentioning ballistics in the MLK shooting is confusing to me. If you want comment, I do not know what sort to give. What I now say may not refer well to what you want. Any bullet striking bone at sufficien tly high velocity can go to pieces-- wholly or in part. My understanding is that the bullet strucj the jawbone (I may be wrong), so I would expect some fragmentation. This is not to say that the bullet disintegrates so completely that large partions are not recoverable. It may go either way--all to pieces or partly to pieces. The Core-Lokt, I imagine, would tend to go partly to pieces, since the base is held intact by the thickening of the jacket in the middle. If the bullet did lose many pieces, then surely some would be embedded in the flesh. Understand, too, that a large piece can be recovered with the lands and grooves still visible, but not identifiable with any particular rifle. The lands and grooves may be visible, but sufficiently distorted (there need not be much distortion) to delete their usefulness for identification. The Core-Lokt us designed to mushroom when it penetrated flesh-- what it does on contact with bone cannot be accurately predicted, but at high velocity (as in the MLK shooting) it would, I think, go partly to pieces. If the bone were hard, rigidly fixed, and close to the surface, it might go all to pieces.

I shall probably not be sending any more writing on the minute fragments until I have done the shooting that I want to do, and get the photos and X-rays that I want. I think I can get all that I need for proper shooting, but may not be able to do it until the weather warms and we lose some snow from the ground. Maybe I can shoot indoors-- I don't know. I have reduced the monograph to about 15 double-spaced pages (not counting footnotes).

I look forward to seeing Frame-up. Keep me posted so that I can get it as soon as it is available. If you have extra copies, I would like to see the Publisher's Weekly Review on it.

I saw Time's account of Epstein's New Yorker piece on the Panthers. I find it difficult to believe that Epstein got his "research" from anywhere but on high.

Dell (I think) recently published a book about Foreman. It's worth reading. The autor is sympathetic, but some quotations by Foreman are peerless. There is a chapter on Foreman's comments about the JFK case and a chapter on his treatment of the Ray case.

As you indicated, I found in Greer's testimony a reference to the minute fragments. It's worthless except to help make a complete record-- I do want it for that, so thanks.

In the revised monograph I have played down the notion that there is a conflict between the WC's records and the Panel Report regarding the location of the fragments-- in fact, I think that there is not a conflict, just ambiguity and incompleteness in the WC records. As I review Humes's statements, I think more and more that he knew what he was hiding-- i,e., that he knew what the location of the fragments meant. How else is one to account for that weird phraseology that he used in the autopsy report to describe their location: "along a line corresponding with a line" between the kole in the back and an area in the front. I don't think, however, that the panel knew what the disposition of the fragments meant. If they did, I think they would not have described them in such revealing detail. I suspect, though, that the "line" of finely divided fragments may be in the nature of a fiction to validify the notion that there was something in there that could be referred to as a line. Anyway, you know my feeling about this "line".

We have gotten an enormous lot of snow this winter-- even the natives can't remember having more (Montreal got 20 feet of the stuff-- very little of which has melted, for it has been cold.) It's still coming. We had two springlike days recently, but it was only enought to make your heart leap up before finally it went crashing down again into the bowels. We've been lucky to have a local farmer come whenever we need him to blow out our driveway. Otherwise, I think I would just have let myself rot away in the house. I need a good bright spring (and a few days fishing) to blow the cobwebs out of my brains.

Stay well,

still,

Dick